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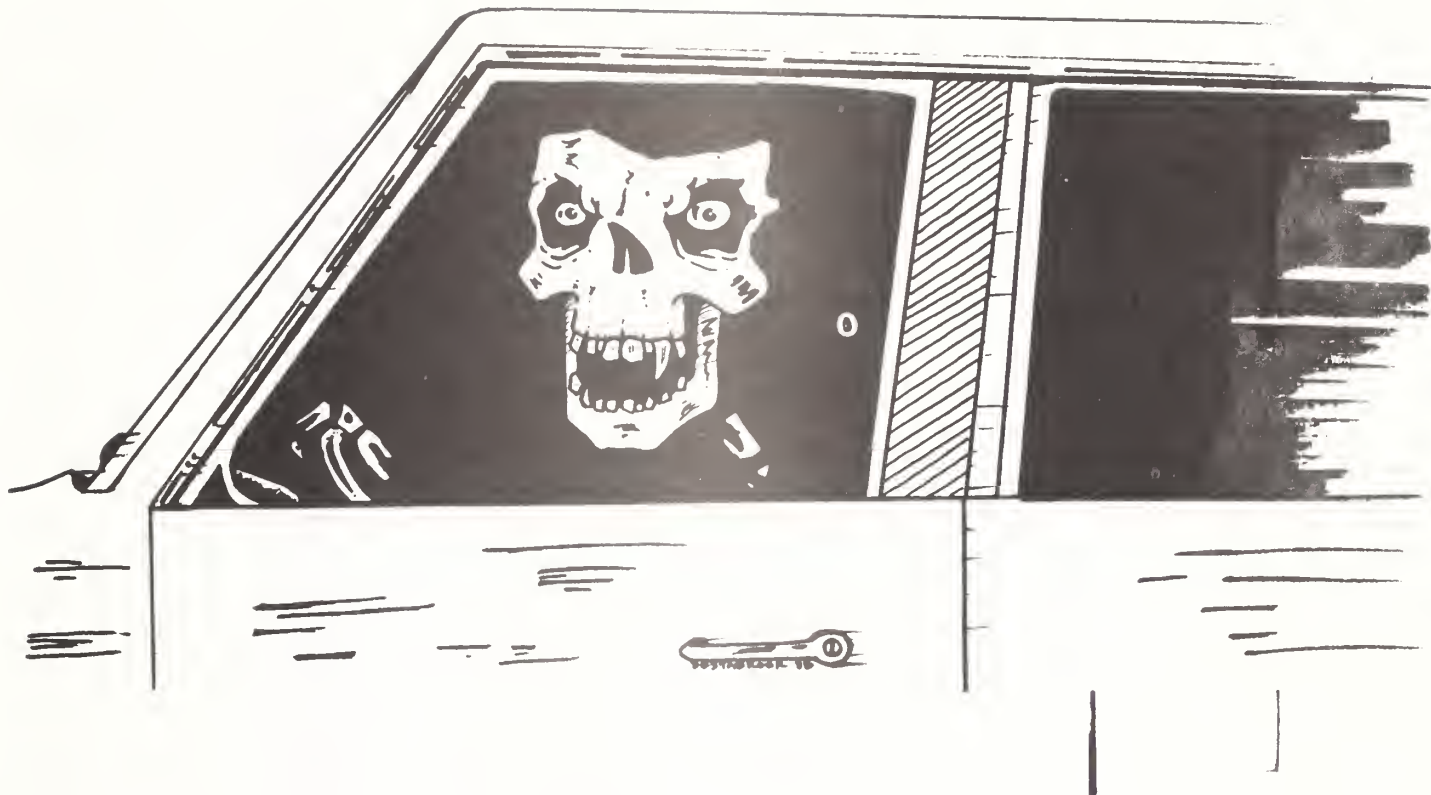
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DEATH CHASE

by John Radosta

"RUSTY, slow down! You're retired now. You said yourself you'd take it easy from now on."

"Oh Helen, calm down," he retorted, "I'll go as fast as I want. And besides, the car behind us has been following us for the past 15 miles. I want to make sure he doesn't want anything with us."

"Following us? You've read so many damn mystery books that you're paranoid. He's just going the same way."

"Helen, shut up," he said. "Here, listen to the radio and stop bothering me." He switched it on. He had to go up and down the dial twice before he could find a station that came in well enough. Billy Joel's "Piano Man" was playing. They drove in silence for a while. As he relaxed, Rusty gradually slowed his Buick Regal from 60 to 50 m.p.h. The street was deserted except for the Buick and a cherry-red Trans-Am with a nearly opaque tinted windows about fifty yards behind. The noon-time sun shone brightly on the golden eagle that adorned the Trans-Am's hood.

Suddenly the Trans-Am leapt from behind Rusty's Buick, blaring its horn and disappeared around a bend up ahead. Rusty nearly went off the road letting the other car go by.

"Come back!" he yelled to the now-gone car. "I'll take care of him," he muttered and put his foot down on the gas. When he made the turn, the Trans-Am was half-a-mile ahead.

Helen had a terrified look in her eyes. Earlier, she had complained about going sixty miles an hour, and now they were racing at past seventy. She wasn't happy about her husband getting into a fight either.

"Rusty! Stop it!" she screamed. "Forget it. He's gone now!" But he drove on relentlessly, the speedometer slowly inching its way towards eighty.

By now he had cut the distance to 100 yards and gaining. It was his turn to do some dangerous dare-deviling. The Trans-Am seemed to slow down as if inviting the old man's retaliation. Rusty smiled. Helen desperately grabbed for her seat belt and pushed herself back into the seat, her teary eyes shut tight. Vangelis' "Chariots of Fire" was barely audible over the screaming engine.

The red car weaved on the tarmac in reply to the Regal's own attempts to pull ahead. After a mile and a half, the road widened enough to let Rusty drive along side the Trans-Am's passenger side -- looking into the windows he couldn't even see how many were in his antagonist's vehicle. He decided it didn't matter anyhow.

Suddenly, the Trans-Am hit the Buick broadside. Rusty was furious. With a snappy spin of the wheel, he forced the Pontiac skidding and spiraling across the median strip, through the return lane, and into a rest area.

Rusty turned the Buick into the first exit and immediately slowed down to 55. The sudden deceleration startled him. His heart was racing and sweat was dripping off his forehead. As he turned on the air conditioning, he looked at Helen. She had fainted dead away. "Helen, Helen!" he said gently, tapping her face. "Helen! Wake up! It's over. Wake up!"

Groggily she gained consciousness. When she had regained control of her senses, she quickly said, "I'm going to be sick." Before Rusty had completely stopped the car, she had unbuckled her safety belt and was opening the door.

While Helen vomitted behind an oak, Rusty scrutinized the rear-view mirror. Suddenly, he saw a small red dot five miles back, obviously flying at incredible speed.

"Helen! Get the hell back in the car! Now!" he screamed. "I'm cleaning myself off. Wait." she said faintly.

"Forget that!" he yelled furiously. "Let's go!"

Uncertainly, she hurried back into the car. "You better fasten your belt." he said as he did the same. "He's coming back."

The Buick screeched back on the road and within seconds was careening forward at 75 mph. When the Trans-Am was out of sight, he slowly decelerated and again turned into the first visible exit, being careful not to leave any tell-tale skid marks.

He drove nearly head-on into the garish red car. The howling protest of the Regal's engine as he slammed it into reverse and Helen's horrified scream were one noise. When he was back on the main road, he pondered a second, trying to remember the direction from which he had come. He couldn't remember, so he instinctively turned right.

Immediately the Trans-Am was on Rusty's driver's side. Helen was still screaming. Rusty tried to peer through the black glass, but all he could see was

his own reflection. But then he realized it was a vision of another Rusty, one nearly fifty years younger. Fascinated, he watched different events unfold before his eyes, events that time had almost completely purged from his memory.

Most were shown quickly, like a sped up movie, but when he saw his life-saving liver operation from when he was forty played with agonizing slowness, Rusty Corbet, aged 65, realized with whom he was dealing. He smashed the side of the Trans-Am, the red door and part of the front fender crumbling into a red and silver accordion. Helen moaned and fainted again. Rusty just yelled.

"You bastard! You're not gonna get me! No way!" He slammed the wheezing Buick into his adversary. The Trans-Am's window shattered, leaving a short line of shiny black splinters in the center line of the two-lane by-way. Rusty was instantly and vehemently disgusted. He was looking square into the face of an ivory skeleton clothed in a black leather racing suit with twin scarlet stripes down the sleeve. Death gave a curt nod, and with a twist of his grotesque arms, hit the Buick broadside. Above the objecting cries of the two engines, the theme of "Peter Gunn" was blasting out of Death's Hell-bought stereo system.

Suddenly, the phantom spun its skull, dropping its lower jaw. An ancient Mack truck was barrelling along from around a bend. There was not time to stop or even slow down. The Mack jackknifed, sending the Trans-Am spinning and they exploded in separate rapidly expanding fireballs.

Rusty whooped with joy. "Helen! Helen! Wake up! I beat death! You hear me? I...beat...death!!!"

Helen never awoke. A highly intoxicated young man, driving in both lanes of the street, sped his father's Jaguar head-on into Rusty's car. The Corbets died instantly in the following explosion, but the bombed teenager lived long enough for a State Policeman on the scene to listen to his obviously drunken ravings about a cherry-red Trans-Am chasing him. But in both accidents, only the three vehicles found were involved in any way.

So you see, Death can be everywhere, and he never loses. Never.



MEANING

Track any poet to a beginning
And in a dark room you discover
A little boy intent on sinning
With an etymological lover.

- GEORGE BARKER

Teach me to write
The single word:
To seduce, to delight
The girls and the world
Respectively.

Show me the method
Of outward declaiming:
The syllabic pattern,
The process of naming
Love's capacity.

Advise me on poems,
On prayers, on music;
Explain me the purpose
Of wax and of plastic,
Of her chastity.

- Thomas DeFreitas



AGING

My mind is fresh
 Like the rising dawn
 My heart beats
 As the vessels of life rush on
 I live for others,
 I live for life.
 When the winds of time
 Tumble through
 Do not struggle
 Do not fight
 Only think of your past
 As future blood
 For the children of our race
 And allow the hands of fate
 To carry you through in her peaceful arms
 As father time rewinds again, again, and again...

- D.M.D.

BROKEN DREAMS

Oh dreams,
 why don't you come true?
 Silver lakes and flowers in spring,
 These are the things that life should
 bring.
 Where is the perfect fairy-tale life?
 Why can't I be a Cinderella or
 Snow White?

O dreams,
 why is life so boring and dull?
 No Prince Charming, no white knight
 on a shining horse.
 Merely day after day, in rapid succession,
 All the same, no surprises.

Oh dreams,
 why have you let me down?
 Where are you when I need you?
 You exist only in my mind.
 Only I have the key that unlocks
 your door and sets you free,
 Yet there you stay, in my mind.

Oh dreams,
 someday won't you come true?

- Kathy Wall

NO ONE KNOWS

No one knows how fast
 time flows, until -
 Lovers grasp it,
 seize it,
 mold it,
 knead it,
 shape it,
 extend it,
 and then, at last -
 Lovers end it.

- Megan Thomas

BAD WEATHER

It snowed like history in the ears;
The cats and dogs were howling for years.

A timeless airplane once split a rock,
Crashed on the runway at twelve o'clock.

A glacier struck at quarter of two.
A formal Ice Age was then renewed

By hexagonal law. Convention
Yields to the solstice of creation.

It snowed in the mind like chemistry.
The cats and dogs strained their eyes to see

The arctic lips of Art and Reason
In this kaleidoscopic season.

To kiss the shore was intense. Waves, black,
Mounted the snowy sand, left no track,

Quoted the Koran, then sighed slow. Their
Sibilance fractured the coastal air.

It snowed like algebra, graphed the earth.
The cats and dogs factored the rebirth

Of blood-slurping skin-breaking despair.
Conic-sectioned snowdrifts killed the air.

Alphabetic veins, invertwined,
Strangled sex in the subtracted mind.

There was a stasis: cervical fright
And heartless vocals. The whole numb night,

It snowed. I cried. Your marble-white face
Was cold in its smooth, declining grace.

- Thomas DeFreitas



THE MIND

The joy,
the sorrow,
the hopes,
the dreams of tomorrow,
the nightmares,
things that creep around and scare,
the anguish,
the anger,
the realm of the cosmos,
all a playground for the mind.

- Shirley Jones.

A FUNKY DAY

by Anna Macgregor

I was sittin' on the steps outside my friend Paco's house eatin' this candy bar I stole from La Casa Alegre, when I seen the most beautiful momma I ever seen before in my life. She looked straight out of a Kool and the Gang video or somethin'. She had long, shiny black hair down to her knees, and she was real thin, and was doggin' some real nice jeans. She had on this tiny little fuzzy pink thing on top, and some shiny white heels. "Huzza-huzza!" I mumbled to myself, and I wolfed down the last bits of my bar and ambled along behind her, real subtle-like.

It was a real nice day. The sky was blue, blue, and no clouds anywhere. All the rooftops was framed with that blue, like some hippy had painted along behind them. Hippies was always paintin' everythin' everywhere where I come from when I was growin' up. I still pass this big ol' mural of some poor whooped folk pullin' at a chain, all of 'em half nekked, even the women, 'cept the women don't even turn you on, 'cause they're so sorry lookin'. Not like this momma I was followin'. Not at all.

This momma, she was, as I was sayin', extremely fine, and as I was strollin' along in back of her admirin' her qualities, I almost followed her right into the apartment building she went into. I didn't know whether she was goin' in for a while or what, but I hung out in front for a while, puffin' on some Kools. I didn't have nuthin' else to do; so I figured, what the hey??

I was on my third Kool when these two dudes came around the corner, cussin' and shoutin' at each other. 'Cept they was cussin' in Spanish, so I couldn't tell exactly what it was all about that they was fightin' over. But whatever it was, it musta been good.

One of 'em was tall and real skinny. He had on some bad clothes, though, and you could tell that he was one o' them dudes who takes a real long time gettin'

dressed in the mornings. His paints had a nice crease in front, and his shoes was shiny, and you could tell his tie pin and cufflinks was real gold. He looked real sharp.

His friend -- well, he wasn't quite so sharp. He was even taller than the Skinny Dude, but much heavier. And he didn't seem to have spent quite so much time gettin' prepared that morning. (I say "that morning" because I'm givin' him the benefit of the doubt. However, my guess would be that he never looks mighty hot.) Anyways, this dude, he was, as I was gettin' at, not so sharp. He had on this real nasty shirt -- all shiny and brown with coconut trees all over it. And that collar looked like sumpin' I wore in the first grade -- killer points. And those pantlegs -- ding-dong, if you know what I mean. And the shoes -- well, pointy they was, but Guccis they wasn't. Anyhow, Dude #2 didn't quite cut it.

They were arguing still, and I was shocked. The Skinny Dude was just about wild now, and I was wonderin' if anythin' was gonna happen, 'cause the big Dude had that fiery look in his eyes, even though he wasn't sayin' much, 'cept, "No" or "Si" every once in a while. The Skinny Dude just kept on hollerin', and finally he started hoppin' around the Big Dude. If ever I seen a dude tryin' to start somethin', this dude was tryin' to do just that.

Suddenly, the Skinny Dude started shovin' the Big Dude. I couldn't believe it! But the Big Dude just stood there sayin' "No", "No", "No".

Well, things started gettin' what you'd call tedious what with the Skinny Dude pushin' the Big Dude and then the Big Dude saying' "No". Finally, though the Skinny Dude lands the Big Dude right on the mug, and the Big Dude goes stumblin' backwards and falls on a Caddy parked behind him. But just as that happened, the door to the apartment building opens, and the Fine Momma comes out yellin', "Julio! You leave my brudder alone!"

Well, finally it dawned on me that what was happenin was that the Big Dude didn't want Skinny messin' wit' his sister Fine Momma.

"Dang" I was thinkin' to myself, "I wouldn't chance it with Big Dude even for her!" 'Cause My Momma was really giggin' now. She'd changed from the small pink thing into some extremely small, extremely hot black thing, and she nearly blew me away.

She glided down them steps and grabbed Big Dude by the back of his neck. "Vamos, Querido", she said, and whuddya know, she strolls off hand in hand with my ol' pal Big Dude, wit' him all fat and slimy lookin' like he was.

When the Momma and Big Julio turned the corner, Skinny Dude was still shoutin', "I'll tell Mama! I'll tell Mama!"

THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN

Tell the warden that I was sentenced
To seventeen years of hard labor.
I have been a model prisoner
And want time off for good behavior.
My cell mate has been a schizophrenic.
Sometimes a king - sometimes a queen -
My worst enemy or my only friend.
He pretends to be an artist,
but the only pictures that he paints
Are those within his mind.
He is at times self-contained,
But lapses into moments of wild-eyed frenzy,
His appearance is disarming -
Stained-glass eyes, sharp-toothy smile, and spatula hands,
Looking rather innocent, until he changes his color
to guilt.
He is one of a kind, and he is everyone.
He is an impossible man.
Today he is everything that I do not like.
Today I want out of this cell.
Tell the warden that I want change -
Just for one day.

- Arnold J. Kemp

Finally, though, he got tired and just sat down on the hood of the Caddy, but not without brushin' it off first, so's not to mess up the seat of his pants. I walked over and gave him a cigarette.

"T'anks, Mahn," he said, but then he started gabbin' in Spanish, and I had to shut him up, 'cause he was makin' me dizzy with all that gibberish. So he just sat there wit' his head in his hands, groanin' and moanin'. He was really buggin' me, so finally I goes to him, "Lissen, Man, what you gonna do when you get yoself some fine-lookin' lady someday -- are you gonna be wantin' her brother all messin' wit' you? Shoot, no."

He looked up at me and I thought, "Oh no, here comes that Spanish jive again," but instead, he just laughs and laughs, and he don't stop for a long while, but when he finally do, he takes me over to this place and buys me some fried bananas or something. They was good, too.



ANNEX

Once again I check my watch,
waiting for the phone to ring.
I want to hear the deep voice
that gives me instructions.
There's so much to be done,
but I must not do
anything until I hear my future.
The assignment was vague,
so I wait.
My eyes want to close but I mustn't sleep.
It's the afternoon;
people sleep during the night.
I slept during the night,
(I think)
but there was no dream.
(I suppose)
The pain is coming back, I know.
There isn't any fear
this time.
Mother helped me with it.
She made them chewable,
just like candies.
People don't know what they are,
or what my pain is.
Only he knows.
The deep voice tells me all.

Now there's more than silence.
The people who live beneath
the floor are fighting again
and above there are odd noises.
I sink into the center of
the bed. the light hits my eyes.
although they're closed now)
sleep doesn't come to me.
they came home and turned
on the television.
They give me a headache
with their distracting questions.
"Do you want something to eat,
while you're waiting to eat?
How many are we?"
I don't worry about it,
because they'll never find
their answers.
There isn't even breath sometimes,
so I don't move to look at them.
It's always warm in here,
and rarely empty.
Outside the hall has cold
damp air.
it should rain on my threshold.
I can hear the pelting water on my door



as I rise into darkness.
They'll think it's the faucet, but I know:
it's my rain.
Now, as the water slips into the cracks on
the wooden floor, I leave.
I won't fall down.
They wouldn't be upset
that I left.
Only the hole in the ceiling
will disturb them.
I'm sorry that there was
no phone call.
Perhaps later he'll explain
everything to them.
They'll feel better when they
hear the deep voice
which knows all.

- Nancy Dingley

THE INDIFFERENT LOVER?

Love is not a thing, or place, but a state of mind,
And if you have loved and lost, I think you'll find
To have been spared the pain would be all too kind,
To have your heart broken is not to bleed.
Love is the bold knight upon a mighty steed.
Love is found on mountains high, and valleys deep:
Love is a bird that you cannot keep.
Though love be the conquerer of kings, and the tamer of beasts,
Of all the emotions, people fear it the least.
I was once in love; I won't try to deny,
But my wings are now broken; I can no longer fly.
She was my reason for living, the melody of my song;
Now my heart is broken and the music is gone.
But I will meet her tomorrow in a secret place;
I will tell her my feelings; I want to see her face,
For as long as there is love, there is hope.

- Justin Roberson



ONLY FOR CICERO (for Mr. Sakey on his retirement)*

Like Vergil's leader who calmed the riot,
You silently instilled respect;
Your whisper rose above the din of
Sarcasm and acrimony,
And will be heard long after the storm subsides --
If ever it does.

Only for Cicero would you
Raise your voice.

- Charlotte Mandell

*Mr. Sakey served as a mine detonator during WWII. When asked what was the most important thing he learned from that experience, he said, "Never raise your voice above a whisper" -- for it you did, you could set off the explosives and accidentally blow up a mine.

OVER

I guess I've known some people
your disaffected kids
Jamaica Plain rats in Baracutas smoking
in front of Brigham's
Green Line punk-we-dos
in black cashmere coats and
Outskirt poets and artists hiding
behind a sort of wired-out gaze, man
While I moved among them
in a sweater and jeans
"Three bucks in my sock and a six of Rolling Rock"
And I guess I watched them blow out
one by one only I remained
meeting them on trolleys or in Sparr's
some too weak to shake your hand
punched one too many T-cops
a few just dropped through the cracks
thought I saw Bobby on the outbound side
at Dover but it was late I was buzzed
I guess I've done the dating scene
Been in and out of love
Bill Corbett's line: "Joy is too pure a thing none are safe"
Made the right moves the wrong moves
I know the mailman's name
Burned-out alleys, chestnuts in my pocket
I guess I made the rounds of parties
knew the right people
did the right drugs
said the right things
Slept on sidewalks and kitchen tables
and hammocks and milkcrates and beaches
Always a little detached - but I've quit because
"what I don't know no longer makes me talk too much"
read that in Bill's Collected
in bed in Maine in love
I guess,

- Josh Glenn



OBLIVION

there is a state of future (sight).
last night's glance
hurt me.
one small instant,
yet I perceived
all -- metamorphosis.
she, a sickly pale,
a birdlike thinness,
clung desperately
hermetically sealing
her base desires.
you retained your wit
but wore the sardonic
smile.
her presence showed
your pejoration,
decline.
an unbuttoned black shirt
hung limply
bearing a heart of no respect;
now engulfed in conceit
not passion.
the phone call helped you to
avoid her
(an escape to Radio Land)
you loved her
but the folly in your
eyes told me
that you did
(of course)
not love her.
our anguish.
I wanted to help you; stop you,
but I know that I'm just
an observer of time.
this difference, this change
is stereotyped!
was it; will it be?
what blocked your perception?
are we alike no more?
this ignorance frightens me
as I woke
the number 992
was spoken through
decadent kisses
and then...static.

- Nancy Dingley



NO.

if I said,
would you?
no? didn't think so.

you can't push a rope,
even if.

nor can you unsay,
try though you.

nor can you undo,
after you.

nor can you unkill,
when you.

no, for try I,
and.

- John Cradock



POEM NO. SOMETHING PLUS 2

Thank you for
Storing my book away
In some deep and dark
Shelf (of yours) and
Allowing the context
Between the leather to
Rot from a
Summer's lingering.
It's been very decent
Of you to have left
The mildewed pages
Folded and uncut as
Not to damage it
In your deep appreciation.
My gift pours nothing
More than a book mark,
So be so kind as to
Keep the dried rose
And discard the sour-
Smelling and blank verses,
Bibliophile.

- John Chan

APOSTASY OF LOVE

The most unthinkable
Flower that ever will have grown
Is the explicit lilac with its lurid scent,
With its vivid lusting and sweating lips:
A breath alive, a flesh unknown,
A sex springlike and full.

The heresy of scent and sight.

The ripest sweetest fruit
Turned liquid on the swirling tongue
Beomes a wine-drunk whisper tasting loud,
Revives forgotten midnights in the gut
And blackish dreamlike saccharines
Stimulate the tooth.

The felony of taste and sound.

Two souls, four lungs: each nerve
Breathes the fulfillment of its dream
While the apostasy of love like the unified wave,
The eternal ecstasy of the sanctified urge,
Makes live, in one climactic rhyme,
Epitome of sense.

- Thomas De Freitas

I TRIED

I tried to prevent it
But it happened.
I tried to fix it
But it got worse.
I tried to pretend it wasn't there
But it kept getting bigger.
I tried to hide it
But everyone could see.
I tried to get help
But no one would.
I tried to tell someone
But no one would listen.
I tried and I tried and I tried
But I just couldn't do it anymore
... so I stopped ...
I just stopped.

- Erik M. Knox

A JOB

by J. Maroun & C. Reiner

HE had been watching him for nearly two months. James Mires would arrive in his grey BMW -- plates 041WEX -- between 4:53 and 4:58. Never later; never earlier. He would then walk through the side door, only to appear a minute later at the front in order to check the mailbox. Mr. Mires would read the mail, turn on the stereo and play a Louis Armstrong or Bennie Goodman album -- he was fond of jazz. Then he would prepare his meal. And at exactly 5:30 every day he would award himself a sole martini, the only drink of the day.

On Tuesdays, Thursdays, and an occasional Friday he went out with his girlfriend, staying out well past midnight each time. The other weekdays were either spent in his home office, where he read and caught up on work, or in bed. He rarely watched television. Weekends were spent visiting, with or without his girlfriend.

James Mires was a successful businessman. Too successful.

Dark eyes watched Mires leave his house, get in the BMW and drive off to meet his girlfriend. A shadowy figure walked cautiously to the door and open it -- he was well prepared. Silently he entered the dining room. The bar was on the far wall. A smile.

The following day, having just returned from work, Mires was thinking how much he would enjoy his 5:30 martini when the doorbell rang. Outside waiting was a man of average stature wearing a charcoal trenchcoat, black leather gloves, a cap, and a woolen scarf. The air was chilly.

"Mr. Mires?" asked the man.

"Yes," assured Mires.

"May I come in?"

"Who are you?"

A look of embarrassment washed over the man's face, "I'm sorry, you must excuse me. Allow me to show you my card." He reached into his trenchcoat and drew out a Magnum 357, pointing it at Mires. "May I come in?" he once again requested as he took a step forward.

The kitchen was large. They proceeded to the dining room, a moderate sized room with an oaken table, eight seats and a

small crystal chandelier. There was the bar on the far wall.

He took a seat and offered one to his 'host', who sat on the far end of the table.

"Who are you?" demanded a frightened Mires.

"William Tracy."

"What do you want?" Mires was trembling visibly.

"I want to kill you," Tracy was calm. His response silenced the shaken businessman.

"Why? Who sent you?" Mires was frantic.

"Why? Because I was hired. Who sent me..." a smile cracked his cold face, "that is irrelevant."

Mires leaned forward, "I'll give you money." The deperate man was playing for time, "I'll give you anything you want!" "Sorry Mr. Mires." Tracy aimed the weapon at his victim's head. Mires closed his eyes. Tears welled and ran down his cheek. Click. Mires shuddered. Nothing. Tracy stood there smiling thinly. Suddenly his face went cold again; he lowered his weapon and walked out.

Mires' frame collapsed. He was drenched with sweat. He really need his martini now.

Outside Tracy walked down the street. He had been hired almost two months ago. He could have simply shot him a while ago, or this evening, but that was too ordinary. A stabbing too crude. No, he preferred to watch and learn about Mires. He had wanted to make things interesting. After all, this was his job and he might as well enjoy it.

He looked at his watch: 5:30.



UNREQUITED LOVE

How softly it steals upon my heart
Like a warm summer breeze,
 Refreshing,
 Soothing,
And I enjoy the feeling--
 The freshness,
 The newness,
 Love.

But the fire soon kindles,
 burns.
It catches quickly and
licks my heart
with sizzling tongues
of red.

 And it smiles
 That goddamn smile.
 Spreading quickly,
 Triumphantly.
Nothing will quench it.
Nothing will soothe it.
And the sighs
of the summer breeze
only anger it further.
 Unrequited.

- Christine LaRosa

CLONE

With magazines piled ten feet deep
She reads about her beauty sleep.
She reads advice of clothes and trends
And how to look just like her friends
Let's be Madonna! It's all the rage!
And makeup, too. Quick, turn the page!
And now she hates the clothes she's bought!
They're not in style! What God has wrought!
"I want Klein, Forenza too!
It's just so in! Can I be you?"
They march along off production lines:
They get their ways with pleas and whines.
Their impeccable style is not a little hackneyed,
But I'd like to know if they'll ever be free.



INSIDE

I don't know, I
find myself looking up
comon oxidation numbers
and I suddenly get that
flash, you know, "I'm stuck
in this body and it's me"
I wonder why I dress like
this why not white sneakers
why not a crewcut who
am I fooling?
we can't sit still, students here
everyone itches and jiggles and
there is a sort of tired
humor rising like bubbles
in old Coke which keeps us
going when we are thirty-three
chapters behind in Passage
to India, man and we
take strange pleasure in
standing blankly in the
corridor trying to remember
our combinations and boy
I could use a smoke what
day is it, dude?
what a wonderful grey void
we've created we revel in it
God, I could hardly get
out of bed this morning
so lame no half-days this
week same old thing
existential malaise did
you do that essay you did
what are you out of your
mind?
of course.

- Josh Glenn



K. G.

SENTIMENT SIX

A negative sentiment, six feet deep,
Which I felt though feel no more:
In my life this sleep the tears I weep
Create a somber stain upon the floor.
Down on my knees I scrub so hard
To eradicate the blotch I have made:
Sin I am scarred by, from life I am barred
By the knowledge that all crimes are paid.

- John Cradock



MSSR LOUP-GAROU

She is silhouetted in the full moon;
 It was a mistake to venture onto the moors alone.
 The chase is on.
 I am breathless, panting, desperate.
 She runs like the wind, but will be
 caught; she is not strong like the others.
 She must be caught.
 My mouth is as dry as the autumn
 leaves over which we run,
 She must be caught.
 It has been a month since the last time;
 it feels like a lifetime.
 I am so hungry.
 My mouth is so dry.
 She must be caught.
 She has fallen, she can run no
 longer.
 I leap, she is defenseless.
 My mouth is at her soft, white throat,
 biting, tearing - oh the blood!
 I am sated.
 I shudder, and then, suddenly, I am
 man again.
 Whimpering, I crawl away from the
 corpse and try to vomit the memory
 of the night.

- SADO

ON MEETING AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE

Chaos, chaos, rules my mind.
 Dear confusion, please be kind.
 We know not where we're going to
 But don't forget: thou must be true.
 We must not steal; we must not hate;
 I can't recall the other eight.
 Say what you mean! Mean what you say!
 For very soon we must away.
 Only, first, where have you been?
 Why, to see the king's horses and see the king's men
 None could say that there's truth in this place;
 No liar would think to unmask his face.
 Bur carpe diem! Seize the day!
 Now 'tis time to pave our ways
 Through separate worlds of joy and rue.
 And now, my dear, I must adieu.

- Anonymous



SONATA I

Like a jewelled snake,
The theme wraps around my wrist,
Cool, amber eyes stare calmly into mine.
Snake has turned charmer, and I can only sway, fascinated,
Reptilian ecstasy filling me completely.
An eye winks; a minor modulation appears.
Two spiraling, intertwining;
Below, the solid earth,
Above, the ethereal sky.

- Geneve Allison

DECEMBER

the snow comes down
onto the dingy, gray city
and covers with virginal whiteness
its dirt and poverty
leading one to believe
that all is well in our lovely city
that people are kind
that life is perfect
and that yes Virginia,
there really is a Santa Claus
But when the snow has melted
baring our tainted city
we realize
that it has remained
as cruel as ever

- Maria Blackburn

INNOCENCE

So soft
(and yes, oh so dear!)
Is the innocence of life,
Which is last upon us
When we are born onto this earth.
Was it not the innocent virgin?
Who was thrown to the Titan
So pure, so white,
As it coats one with
A blanket of security,
Tightly drawn to protect all
Against the biting wind
Of man.
But once a crack is opened,
Once a breeze let in,
The troubles of life take over,
And chaos is formed within.

- Lisa Cherin



THE ENIGMA OF BEING by Liz Siegel

ALAN sat in a new swivel-chair on the other side of the cold, steel-grey desk. Dr. Martel sat behind it, a beady-eyed bulgy man, neat manila folder in hand. He was nearly hairless except for a profusion of sprouts above his upper lip. Alan glanced at the horridly annoying man with an air of tolerance and patience. Dr. Martel did the same.

"You see, Alan," the doctor was saying, "I'm here to help you distinguish between reality and these hallucinations which your disease is building. This is a dreadful affliction, but with intense therapy, your delusions can be alleviated."

Alan fiddled with a bent paperclip, eyes on the man, mind somewhere else. Dr. Martel had approached Alan and his parents only two hours earlier. "Mr. Resnick, Mrs. Resnick..." he had acknowledged the three with a sweeping gesture, but had excluded Alan with a somewhat conspiratorial look at the adults. "After having talked to Alan and completed a series of tests, I have come to the conclusion that your son is schizophrenic." The light had gone out of the woman's red eyes. "Schizophrenia," he had continued, disregarding the stricken looks on the parents'

faces, "is a mental disorder characterized by indifference, withdrawal, delusions of persecution and omnipotence, and hallucinations. Your son had been experiencing a great number of hallucinations. This disease, however, is not without cure. I am well-known as one of the best men in my profession. With consistent and concentrated therapy, I may be able to help your son lead a 'normal' life."

Oh, yes, help my son, Alan's mother had silently pleaded, and Mr. Resnick articulated.

So Alan had ended up with Dr. Martel, master of irritation. He did NOT want to be here, but he didn't have much choice.

"Now, Alan," the doctor was persisting with an aggravatingly indulgent smile (God, why couldn't his parents see through him?), "why don't you tell me exactly what you see at this moment."

Alan's eyes opened a little wider, as if asking permission, and freedom from persecution, to really tell his truth. The doctor nodded to urge him on. The boy began hesitatingly.

"Well, there is a grey desk, and a rug, and a file cabinet, and a window..." The doctor smiled. "There's a deep hole by the window, it's dangerous, he's telling you not to..." The doctor's eyes brightened almost imperceptibly. Alan was clearly distressed.

We listen to muffled mumblings
Over the loudspeaker, and
Grow silent.

A paper cackles somewhere --
The sound is magnified,
It echoes in your brain.

You mind is a junkyard
Of confusion (Why is it
So hard to concentrate?):
Bright images, not of the
Dead, but of the living,
Flicker up and fade away,
Like pictures in a slide-show.

Later, people will put on
Grave faces, and will shake
Their heads and say "Just
Like when Kennedy died,"
And will go into deep mourning
For many minutes.

The sun has drawn a pattern
On the wall, and you watch
As its rays sift through
Flakes of dust and dance
Across the ceiling.

You want to shout, to cry,
To feel something more than the
Immediacy of the present --
And then you realize that
The silence has long since
Grown old.

Please, when finally I die,
Give me none of this mandatory
60-second grief, but instead
An eternity of laughter.

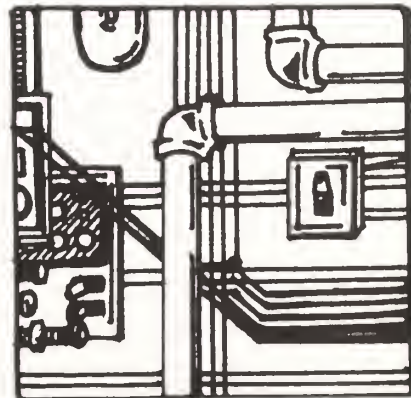
- Charlotte Mandell

INDUSTRIAL POEM

Sunny, happy, pastoral scenes
Are much too jolly for me:
I'd rather live among machines,
Delight in greyest misery.

I'd wake up with the rain each day,
Fix some Quaker oatmeal:
If the sun came out (to my dismay),
I'd pretend it were not real.

- John Cradock



Oh, the little blue man! Parrots squawking, laughter, scraping noises. The bugs, the bugs! Purple...blue. Whoosh! Feather slashed cheek. Blood. Crunchy corn flakes underfoot. Oh, agony...

Alan tried to explain coherently to the doctor that the little blue man with the pointed nose was laughing and pointing to that hazardous hole. That there was a parrot flying back and forth, now and then alighting on Dr. Martel's bust of Freud.

The doctor, with a slight note of triumph and an air of almost-disbelief, dismissed these as common symptoms. "The little blue man is the friend you never had in childhood," he explained tolerantly. "The parrot symbolizes your desire to be free from your self-imposed chains. What else do you see?"

Alan could barely express the horror of the file cabinet...filled with bugs! Oh, the constant scraping upon metal! The couch had feet of rippling purple liquid that could freeze with a touch. Searing pain contorted his face. Excruciation. The laughter. Moans tore from his mouth, wrenched away from the horrors of his mind.

Meanwhile, the doctor explained everything with agonizingly plausible interpretations. Alan began to doubt himself and wondered fearfully how deep his disease had really gone. Trembling, he pulled himself into a fetal ball.

"This is a little more serious than I had expected. Your grasp on reality desperately needs to be strengthened." The pointy-nosed blue man laughed harder. "Will these visions away, Alan. See what I see. Reality. Feel the desk, the rug, the window..."

"No, not the window!" cried Alan, hysterically sobbing now. The squawk of the parrot filled his ears.

The doctor sat down in the real chair of his real world. A hideously concerned expression took over his features. "Come with me, Alan. We'll go through the room together. See, the couch has solid legs. The cabinet is filled with files." Alan saw differently, but outwardly agreed, knowing the doctor was right. He tried with all his might, **CONCENTRATED**, and almost saw Dr. Martel's reality. He began to feel a little better. "Now, there is no hole in the floor." The doctor walked toward the windex-shined window. "Look, this is solid ground. I'm not falling through." Alan whimpered.

Dr. Martel stayed in that position, proving only what he knew to be true. Alan watched with astonishment. Dr. Martel grinned with smug satisfaction. He was right, Alan thought. The doctor was really right! He heaved an immense sigh of relief...

But suddenly, the floor opened up in a gaping chasm! Dr. Martel fell through with a piteous howl, large mustache and spectacles whooshing down. The hole was now clearly apparent. Alan peered over the edge to see a dark tunnel down to unfathomable depths.

The parrot squawked. The little blue man laughed.





WHEN THE SUN BEGINS TO SET

When the sun begins to set:
 don't sit in the dark,
 When the tide starts to ebb:
 bathe in the sun,
 When the snow is going to fall:
 make a bright fire,
 When the race is passing you by:
 break-away,
 When the milk is spilt:
 wake the cow,
 When the clouds begin to gather:
 take up an umbrella,
 When the world is falling in:
 get out nails and hammer.

- Megan Thomas

FUTURE SHOCK

No form.
 No feeling.
 No thought.
 Any emotion would comfort them more.
 Some hate,
 Pain, or
 Even guilt
 Instead there is just numbness surrounding your grave.

- E.M. Carris



THE HOUSE:

On a hill
Surrounded
By trees,
Windows boarded,
Doors bolted,
A past
Locked up
For no one
To know;
Secrets
Hidden;
Memories
Forgotten.

- Christine Egan



DREAMS

Dreams, fantasies that somehow seem so real
Reflections of what we wish and feel.
A place where spirits can run wild and free
Heedless of Hatred and Misery.
Freedom from a world in constant strife,
Giving one hope to make it through life.
A place where you and I can stand as one,
Strolling in the rays of the radiant sun.
There, I can be whatever I want to be
And not worry about what others think of me.
But as everything must soon come to an end,
I awake, only to dream again.

- Jeanine Mitchell

I WANT TO STOP...

I dig and dig
For all the problems,
for all the pain.
I dig long and hard,
trying to forget what
I'd seen.
I want to stop
but something urges
me to go on.
My arms hurt and
the blisters have multiplied.
I wonder why and
finally realize
I am dead.
I look up and see
darkenss.
I try to speak and
eat dirt.

- Bijou

USELESS NUMBERS

A girl I "loved" another
I kissed to my dismay &
best friend my sometime
spiritual advisor a fresher
than thou skate punk guy I
had to avoid & a friend whom
I don't see the one I did
love a female friend closer
than any boy one too young
to touch Dad at work in case
of moral dilemma where she
worked & her friend where she
could be reached good old Doug
where we crashed in Bath girl
we knew in London laundromat
blonde in Pisa kids we met in
Paris keep calling & where she
moved to never would admit it
bothered me some ass another
crush I couldn't return family
in Philadelphia cousin at
college & his girlfriend lust
both her houses & that bitch
never forgive in two cities
a present prospect some student
teacher in Allston a girl I
stood up more than once school
old buddy in the cracks you know
& a girl I scooped once in the
South End latest the boyfriend of
a woman scribbled on a two-dollar
bill at a party three more spaces
can't use them now what a life.

- Josh Glenn



I DO NOT APPROVE

I do not approve of death
Unless it is sensual,
Something forbidden, ecstatic
Entered into.
A beautiful misconduct.
The torpidinal,
Stygian kisses
Of an ageless avatar.

I will not venture into love
Unless it is secular,
Some stultifying wine or blood
Swallowed.
An arousing nutrient.
The vertiginal,
Liquid image
Of a spinning psyche.

I cannot accept hostility
Unless it is naked,
The fear-concealing armour of the heart
Removed.
A flesh-and-bone opponent.
The original,
Ferocious body
Of a shameless warrior.

- Thomas DeFreitas

LOOKING ON

Like an ineffectual reader
I am as one looking on,
To whom the sole power given
(By God)
Is to observe.

Before, I watched only the detail
That was myself, that was mine.
But then I stepped back
To see
The whole picture.

Yet an onlooker I remain,
Like Lovecraft's Outsider;
For when I try to join in,
They say,
"Look but don't touch."

- John Cradock

WHAT COLOR AM I

I am a painting
my message is hidden

Crimson
blood streams through my veins
Alabaster
gems adorn my face
Red
my passions hot and steamy
Green
my envy slow and ensconced
Purple
my regal aspirations soar
Blue
my quiet peace, my silent respite
Ebony
my pupils
Golden
light surrounds me

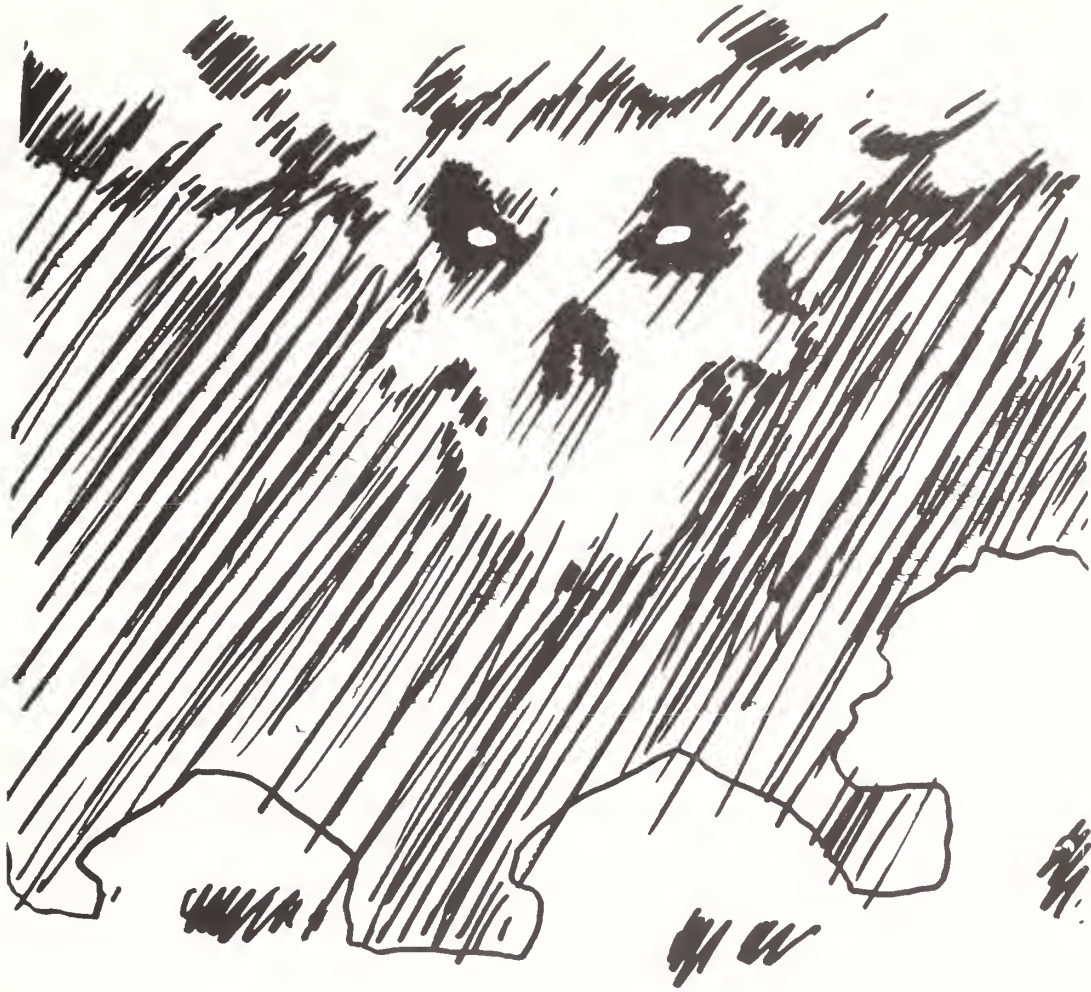
I am a rumor
my essence a secret
I am a rainbow
my colors are many
I am a person
I am a treasure

- Erik M. Knox

FOR YOU

A dance in the dark with
a knowing smile.
A view of the sea as
I touch your hand.
And most of all,
words of love and
needed thanks.

- Genie Carris



D86

DEATH'S MESSENGER

I am Death's messenger,
drifting downward from the heavens,
entering your mind in your
nightmares,
a blizzard of tortures that
fall one by one,
snowflakes to the burning hell,
the soul's fire of life
withering in the blistering heat
and falling to arise again.
I am Death's messenger,
I come to you with the touch of
hell's fire,
a journey through a desolate
desert where the ghosts of
cowards linger on.

Try to touch the sins of man.
They gather in a cluster of pain
to torment the lives of the
remaining.

- Lisa Cherin

SUNDAY

Today is Sunday
as was yesterday and the day before
the lazy feeling it brings
is refreshing at first
but all too soon it becomes tiresome
and envelops your mind with monotony
until you long for a knife
to slash it open
and set yourself free
but today is Sunday
and violence is not permitted.

- Maria Blackburn

TRAIN STATION

by Justin Roberson

THERE is a place in the back of all our minds where we stand, waiting, in a line that seems to have no end, waiting to receive a token to a train, a train that goes nowhere. Everybody waits except those people who have committed extremely serious crimes against mankind - these people have been issued special express passes and are ushered directly to the train, seemingly spared the agonizing wait. This raises the question that maybe it is better to take the express, since most of us are destined for the same place, anyway. For it is not so much the length of time itself, but rather a fear of the unknown that can make five minutes seem an eternity.

Not surprisingly, I recognize many of the people in line. Friends and foe alike wait to board the train. I notice that the faces of the people who have been waiting for a long time seem tired, their eyes grey, lips drawn, and color gone from their faces, while newcomers still have some glint left in their eyes, as if they are thinking of a far-off place where the sun still shines. Looking deeply into their eyes I try to steal the last rays of light that are quickly fading from their minds; and, as each person passes, I take the little bit of light that remains in their eyes. I try to regain my memory so that I might also think of pleasant things. But alas, my effort is in vain, for I am next in line and the coin is in my hand; how cold it seems, yet it burns, like fire. While the driver takes my fare I notice how dark his eyes seem; darker than a night sky in June, for even a night sky has stars that seem like little bits of hope, the telltale signs that promise the dawn.

I board the train, the doors shut, and it is too late - too late for explanations, too late for regrets. My lungs burn as I try to scream... too late.



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